

Unemployment insurance and employers

Keeping unemployment insurance costs down

There are a number of strategies that employers can use to minimize costs associated with unemployment insurance.

- Protest all claims where the separation was due to a reason other than lack of work. Also protest a claim any time the claimant is given severance pay in accordance with company policy. There is no guarantee that a timely response will result in disqualification. However, since the employer must prove misconduct in a discharge case, failing to protest or provide information could easily result in the allowance of benefits. This is because the employer must prove misconduct connected with the work on discharge cases. If there is no employer information then misconduct will only be proven if the claimant gives self-disqualifying information.
- Have written policies and procedures. A claimant cannot be denied for failing to follow policy or procedure if they do not know what that policy or procedure is.
- Document everything. If a new policy is created, have all employees sign a receipt acknowledging they have been advised of the policy. If a verbal warning is given to an employee, document the fact that the warning was given. If the employee is given one final chance after an incident takes place, document the fact that if it occurs again the employee will be discharged.
- Keep all account information up to date. OESC sends notices to the addresses listed on an employer's Oklahoma account number. If the address information is not updated, and the notice goes to an incorrect address, the notice will not be re-mailed, and the employer will lose their right to be an interested party to any subsequent determinations. Questions regarding employer account information can be directed to (405) 557-7226. Please note that all change requests must be submitted in writing.
- Pay employer taxes on time. If taxes are not paid on time, the employer will only receive 90 percent of the FUTA credit.

The unemployment process

When an individual files a new claim for unemployment benefits, OESC notifies the last covered employer of 15 or more working days. When a claimant returns to work during their benefit year and is laid off or discharged from the new job, the claimant can re-open their current claim, even if the claimant wasn't employed for 15 working days. In this case, the employer is sent an OES-617, Notice of Application for Unemployment Benefits and is given 10 days from the mail date of the form to protest benefits. If the claimant is separated from employment for any reason other than lack of work, an investigation will be conducted, and a determination will be issued allowing or denying unemployment benefits in accordance with state law. The employer will only be an interested party to the determination if a timely, adequate response is received in accordance with Section 2-503 of the Oklahoma Employment Security Act. Employers who are not interested parties will not receive a copy of the determination and will not have appeal rights to any subsequent determinations.